



MAKING PRODUCE MORE
VISIBLE, AFFORDABLE
AND ATTRACTIVE



The Minneapolis Healthy Corner Store Program

Summary Report



City of Minneapolis
Health Department

MINNEAPOLIS HEALTH DEPARTMENT
NOVEMBER 2013

Minneapolis Health Department

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City of Minneapolis
Health Department

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The Minneapolis Healthy Corner Store Program,

implemented by the Minneapolis Health Department (MHD), supports store owners in making fresh produce and healthy foods more visible, affordable, and attractive to neighborhood residents. To date, the project has occurred in two phases: Phase 1 in 2010-2011 (9 stores) and Phase 2 in 2012-2013 (30 stores). Both phases of the program have been funded by the Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP), from the Minnesota Department of Health to address obesity and tobacco-related diseases.

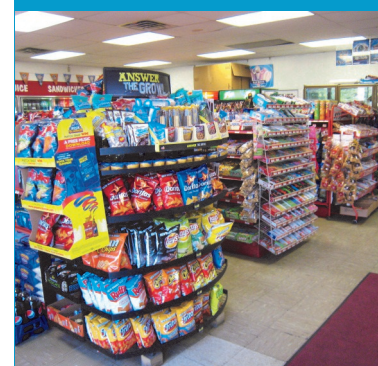
The purpose of this document is to describe the process the Health Department used to implement and evaluate Phase 2 of the Minneapolis Healthy Corner Store Program and to present the results and lessons learned. MHD's programmatic approach offers a model for other communities that want to conduct and evaluate their own corner store initiatives. For a complete description of Phase 1, please refer to the [Minneapolis Healthy Corner Store Report](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/oshii/docs/Mpls_Healthy_Corner_Store.pdf) - Feb. 2012 available at: http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/oshii/docs/Mpls_Healthy_Corner_Store.pdf.

History of the Healthy Corner Store Program

The Minneapolis Healthy Corner Store Program began in 2010 as a way to increase fresh produce at corner stores and to support compliance with the City's staple foods ordinance (Appendix A: Staple foods ordinance). Passed in 2008 by the City of Minneapolis, the ordinance requires stores to carry a minimum of five varieties of perishable produce and other minimum stock requirements of staple foods such as meat, bread, and dairy. In an assessment of 35 stores in north Minneapolis (summer 2009), the Health Department found nearly 75% of stores did not meet produce requirements of the staple foods ordinance. While the ordinance can serve as an important tool for increasing the availability of healthy foods, MHD found it was necessary to support corner store owners' abilities to offer fresh produce and successfully meet the minimum requirements. Thus, MHD launched Phase 1 of the Healthy Corner Store Program in 2010 as a pilot to help store owners improve the visibility, accessibility, attractiveness, and availability of fresh fruits and vegetables. Phase 1 activities were driven by Health Department staff and included offering store "enhancements" to merchandise produce, technical assistance by a retail grocery consultant and opportunities for community engagement events.



Store front in south Minneapolis.



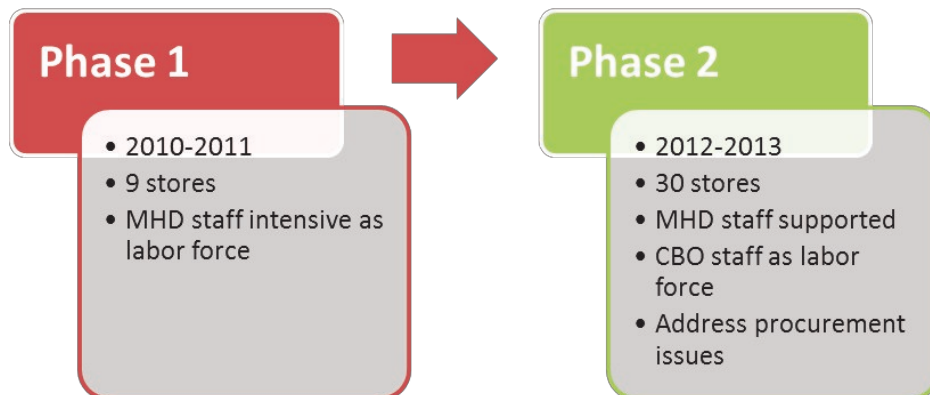
Despite the fact that many customers rely on corner stores for their food needs, most stores carry a disproportionate amount of unhealthy snack foods.

The Health Department made several key changes to Phase 2 informed by lessons learned in the Phase 1 pilot. The Health Department learned:

- Program implementation required extensive staff and consultant time even with a small cohort of nine stores.
- Produce distribution methods continued to be a challenge
- Store owners found it hard to maintain changes and keep produce fresh and attractive.

As a result of the lessons learned, MHD made changes in Phase 2 including, partnering with community-based organizations (CBOs), identifying and testing new produce procurement models, and increasing owner knowledge of proper handling and merchandising techniques. To expand the program past the nine pilot stores in Phase 1 and reduce the labor burden on MHD staff, the Health Department worked with CBO partners who recruited more stores and conducted assessment and enhancement activities.

Phases of the Minneapolis Healthy Corner Store Program



Implementation

Implementation of the project included:

- Partnerships with community-based organizations to extend the program's reach
- Store recruitment
- Baseline assessments and owner interviews
- Store-specific enhancements to display produce more visibly and attractively
- Community engagement events in each store
- Produce procurement pilots
- Site-visits with technical assistance



Before: Produce displayed at point-of-purchase.



After: Counter top display at point-of-purchase.

The Minneapolis Healthy Corner Store Program makes produce more visible and attractive for customers.

Community-Based Organization Partners

MHD recognized working with more stores would be labor intensive and more staff time would be needed to include more stores in the program. To expand the Healthy Corner Store program beyond the nine stores in Phase 1, the Health Department recruited CBOs that had existing relationships with store owners and community residents. Interested CBOs applied to the program by a RFP process and MHD selected two organizations. Additionally, the Health Department worked with four existing partners because they held current contracts with MHD to carry out health improvement strategies that complimented the work. Health Department staff developed a train-the-trainer curriculum, which prepared CBO staffs to replicate program components previously done by MHD such as store enhancements, assessments, community outreach and store recruitment.

Program Objectives

With the overall goal to support store owners in making fresh produce more visible, affordable, and attractive in corner stores, MHD specifically focused on the following objectives:

- Expand the program and provide technical assistance to more stores.
- Increase variety, visibility and attractiveness of fresh produce items.
- Increase store owners' knowledge of fresh produce handling and merchandising.
- Find and explore new solutions for procuring fresh produce.
- Increase sales of fresh produce.

The Health Department contracted with the following community-based organizations:

- Pillsbury United Communities - Waite House
- Wellshare International
- Corcoran Neighborhood Organization
- Harrison Neighborhood Association
- CAPI (Formerly Centre for Asians and Pacific Islanders)
- Appetite for Change (with support from the West Broadway Business Association)

Store Recruitment

MHD focused on north and south Minneapolis neighborhoods with the greatest health disparities and the highest rates of poverty. CBO partners played an integral role in recruitment by identifying potential stores in their area that they felt could benefit from the program. Alongside the Health Department, they conducted store visits, distributed program flyers and verbally invited store managers to participate. To ensure all participating stores were in good standing with the City's Department of Regulatory Services, MHD asked the Business Licensing division to verify that stores had no outstanding citations. MHD recruited 30 stores based on the criteria of geographic location, owner interest and willingness to participate, ability to work within the desired timeframe of the project, and compliance with Business Licensing regulations.

For participation in the program, MHD required stores to:

- Increase visibility of fresh produce selections.
- Display and maintain Healthy Corner Store marketing materials and signage.
- Participate in either one-on-one trainings or group trainings on produce merchandising and handling.
- Implement and maintain improvements to produce selections.

Baseline Assessments

MHD conducted visual assessments (Appendix B: Visual Assessment) in each store to identify quality of produce, number of varieties, and marketing opportunities available in the store. From these assessments, MHD learned:

- Quality and variety of fresh produce ranged from store to store.
- Many stores met minimum requirements of the staple foods ordinance, yet some offered no produce options.
- Many stores offered produce at fair to poor quality and the selection was often limited to items with a long shelf-life such as potatoes, onions and lemons.
- Owners often kept produce on the bottom shelf of coolers not visible from the store entrance.
- Most store owners had posted little to no signage to market fresh produce.
- Many stores had POS systems for tracking sales, yet few owners maintained or used them efficiently or correctly.

Owner Interviews

MHD conducted owner interviews to better understand stores' customer base, shopping habits, and owners' experiences in selling fresh produce (Appendix C: Owner Interview). The interviews provided an opportunity to build positive relationships with owners. From these interviews, MHD learned:

- Stores served between 200 and 500 customers per day and most customers were identified as "regulars".
- Most stores sold more snacks such as pop, candy, and chips than staple foods such as milk, butter, and eggs.
- Most customers were neighborhood residents and many were families, mothers and adolescents.
- Many owners had lost money in the past on fresh produce and, as a result, had little time or interest to spend stocking produce.
- Store owners often purchased their produce at retail stores instead of a wholesaler and preferred to purchase several times a week in small quantities.

MOU not required of store owners in Phase 2

In Phase 1, store owners completed a formal application process and signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to participate. MHD decided this process was unnecessary because it placed an unnecessary barrier for owners and reinforced their perception of the City as a punitive body. In Phase 2, owners needed only to verbally agree on the above requirements and demonstrate their interest and intentions in offering fresh produce.

Store Enhancements to Display Produce Visibility and Attractively



MHD conducted store enhancements to make fresh produce more visible and attractive by merchandising and displays. MHD staff conducted enhancements along with CBO staff and each took approximately two to three hours.

During an enhancement, staff:

- Displayed produce in refrigerator coolers and reconfigured selections to ensure higher visibility of produce and cross-merchandising with other healthy meal items.
- Placed perishable goods in attractive black plastic produce baskets in refrigerator coolers and dry racks.
- Placed “fresh produce” signage in key places to raise awareness of produce options. Signage included banners, window decals, price signs, and shelf signs.
- Placed impulse purchase baskets at front counters.
- Delivered one-on-one produce handling and merchandising tips to store owners to help support their ability to maintain the sets and keep produce fresh.

(See Appendix D for examples of merchandising materials.)

Timeline At-A-Glance

May 2012: Community Based Organizations are identified

June-August 2012: 30 stores recruited

August-September 2012: Baseline owner interviews and visual assessments completed

September-October 2012: Store enhancements and community engagement activities conducted in intervention stores

December 2012: Post owner interviews and visual assessments completed

January, March, May 2013: Monthly follow-up site-visits and visual assessments

Ongoing: Monthly site-visits

Expenses

Staffing

- One MHD staff person: 20 hours/week
- One MHD staff person: 4 hours/week

Contracts

- 7 Community Based Organizations: 10 hours/week for 10 months

Program Expenses

- Merchandising materials (produce signage, window clings, cooler stickers, black baskets) \$150 x 30 stores

Community Engagement Activities

After store enhancements, CBOs organized and held one to two community engagement “kick-off” activities in each store that included advertising or write-ups in community newspapers plus in-store cooking demos or taste-testing opportunities to highlight fresh produce sold in the stores. CBO staff or the University of Minnesota Extension’s Simply Good Eating program conducted the cooking demos. If in-store demos were not feasible, partners worked with owners to host produce raffles or “buy one, get one” promotions. These events helped to draw customer attention and alert neighborhood residents to the new, healthy produce selections available in their corner stores.



Health Department staff used re-purposed coolers in highly visible locations and provided ongoing technical assistance to help owners maintain their produce displays

Trainings and On-Going Technical Assistance

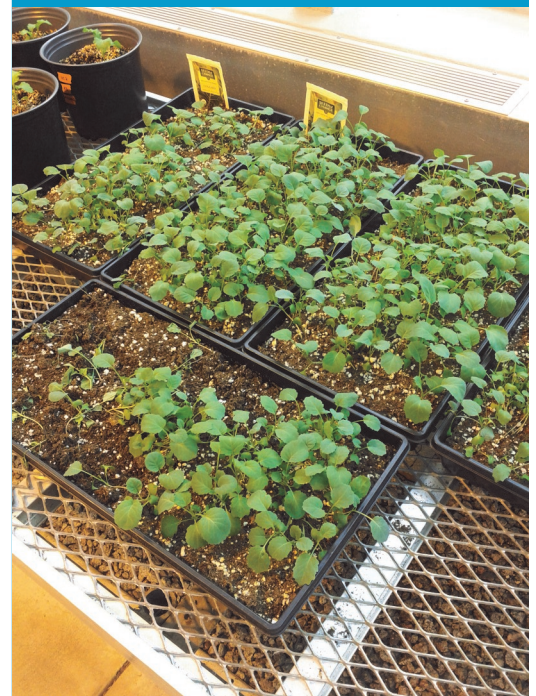
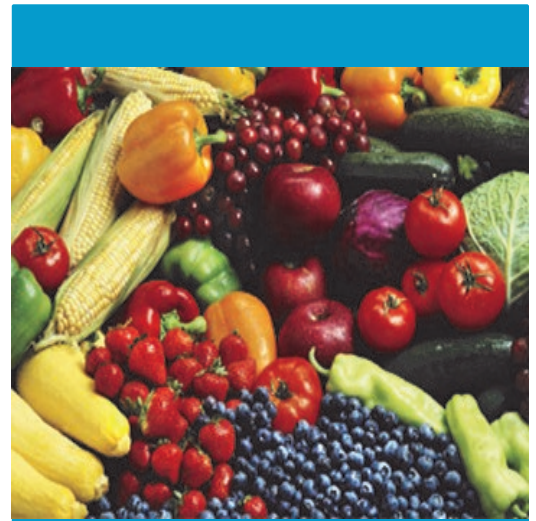
Products typically found in corner stores, such as chips or canned goods, have a long shelf life and require little maintenance once stocked on a store shelf. Fresh produce, however, requires higher labor to maintain its quality and attractiveness. To reinforce the importance of daily produce maintenance and proper handling techniques with owners, the Health Department held informal one-on-one produce handling trainings to store owners during enhancements in their stores. At this time, owners gave their input on store enhancement plans and worked hands-on to increase visibility and attractiveness of their displays. Secondly, the Health Department held formal group trainings that included skill building activities for operating a small business and information on produce handling, product shelf-life, temperature requirements, and tips for creating attractive displays.

MHD found it critical to maintain relationships and encourage participation in the program by supporting owners and praising them for their efforts during monthly site visits. In some stores, store owners stopped maintaining produce displays because they lost interest or time to procure and display fruits and vegetables. The Health Department found that conducting site visits and maintaining a high level of trust with owners was linked to the owners’ ability to maintain produce displays.

New Models of Produce Procurement

Procurement of fresh produce is an ongoing challenge for store owners. In Phase 2, baseline data indicated most owners preferred to directly purchase small quantities of produce several times a week from retail stores such as Cub, Aldi, Sam's Club or Target. They felt buying from a retail store eliminated a "middle man" and gave them more control over how much they purchased and the price they would offer to customers. Few stores bought directly from wholesale suppliers even when the wholesaler offered lower prices than a retail store. While store owners perceive buying their produce from a retailer is best practice, buying from a wholesaler can help keep prices low for customers and relieve owners of the burden of frequent trips to retail stores. However, most stores cannot meet minimum order requirements of a wholesaler or buy large case size quantities because produce would spoil before it was sold.

MHD developed and piloted three procurement models designed to offer reasonable quantities of fresh produce at a fair price, including partnerships with the West Broadway Farmer's Market, University of St. Thomas, and the Emergency Food Shelf Network (EFN).



Seedling being grown in the St. Thomas University greenhouse. Students sold harvested vegetables to corner store owners.

Emergency Food Shelf Network Procurement Pilot

EFN is a non-profit full-service food bank that provides free food, access to bulk food purchasing, and formalized food drive programs to over 200 hunger relief partners in Minnesota. The Health Department partnered with EFN in the fall of 2013 to create a viable way for store owners to purchase produce at a low wholesale cost. Store owners placed orders by phone and EFN delivered produce two days later. To offer maximum flexibility, yet maintain low wholesale prices, EFN sold the produce in half or quarter case sizes. Store owners could choose from basic varieties of fruits and vegetables including bananas, oranges, apples, onions, potatoes, peppers and carrots. The program operated throughout the winter when locally grown produce supplies were low and when retail prices were often high. The Health Department gave price lists and ordering information to all 30 stores.

St. Thomas Procurement Pilot

A biology professor at the University of St. Thomas in the Twin Cities approached MHD in the winter of 2013 after he learned about the Healthy Corner Store Program from the local news media. The professor leads a student-run biology experiment in the University greenhouse testing organic soil growing methods on crop yield, which resulted a surplus of produce that could be used to supply corner stores. In early spring of 2013, St. Thomas had small quantities of collards, mustard greens, tomatoes, and cucumbers to sell to stores. A student from St. Thomas, with the help from Health Department staff, established relationships with store owners interested in purchasing the produce and made regular weekly deliveries to stores.

West Broadway Farmer's Market

Appetite for Change (AFC), a CBO partner operating in north Minneapolis, worked with the West Broadway Farmer's Market to offer discounts to store owners on produce remaining after the peak hours of the market. Additionally, store owners could purchase produce from a vendor that aggregated non-local fruit and vegetables, such as bananas and oranges, from a wholesale distributor in large case sizes. This vendor then divided cases and sold the produce to store owners in smaller quantities.

In addition to the three piloted methods and self-procured methods, a local, mobile produce vendor supplied many stores in north Minneapolis by regular informal rounds to corner stores. During the intervention, MHD contacted him and had a conversation to learn from his work. MHD learned the vendor operates from his van, which is stocked with produce he purchases wholesale and then sells to store owners in any quantity they desire at a very low price.

Program Results

The goals of the 2012-2013 Healthy Corner Store program were to:

- Expand the program and provide technical assistance to more stores.
- Increase the visibility and attractiveness of fresh produce items and increase availability by increasing the number of produce varieties in corner stores.
- Increase store owner knowledge of fresh produce handling and merchandising.
- Address supply issues through pilot procurement projects.
- Increase sales of fresh produce.

To measure the program's impact and success in achieving these goals, MHD evaluated the program using pre-implementation baseline visual assessments, one post-implementation visual assessment, and additional follow-up

The importance of building trust and relationships

Through Phase 1 and Phase 2, establishing a high level of trust by strong working relationships with store owners has been the key to ensuring the ongoing success of the project. In the past, some owners experienced negative interactions with City inspectors that enforce policies perceived as punitive. As a result, several store owners hesitated in participating in a City-operated program due to distrust. This program, in which the City acted as a vehicle of support, was new for store owners. MHD invested time during recruitment supporting owners, listening to their needs and clearly explaining what the program could and could not provide them. MHD also found routine site-visits and follow-up conversations with store owners kept store owners on board with the program, which drove their interest to maintain displays and keep produce well stocked. These experiences provided an opportunity for owners to share their concerns and celebrate their triumphs for selling fresh produce. From these important experiences, MHD learned the program was most successful when the store owner actively engaged and participated in program activities, thus increasing their ownership of the program and self-efficacy to maintain changes.

visual assessments at three, six and nine months. MHD conducted visual assessments and owner interviews with all participating stores at baseline and post-implementation. CBOs and a University of Minnesota graduate student conducted customer surveys post-implementation. Using additional funds granted by the Minnesota Department of Health, MHD conducted a sales data evaluation in a subset cohort of seven stores. For this evaluation, the Health Department collected sales data from each store's point-of-sale system (POS) at baseline, post-implementation, and at three, six and nine months. For the complete report and results of the sales evaluation, please refer to the document [Corner Store Sales Evaluation](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@health/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-115543.pdf) - Final Report October 2013 available at <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@health/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-115543.pdf>.

Expand the program and provide technical assistance to more stores

MHD successfully expanded the program from nine stores in 2012 to 30 stores in 2013. However, program participation was not without challenges. Of the 30 stores recruited to the program, five dropped out. Of these five stores, one store burned down, two stores decided not to participate, and two stores closed for business. Results are based on reporting of the 25 stores completing the program.

MHD worked with CBOs to build their capacity to carry out activities on behalf of MHD as a way to expand the program and include more stores. Using this model, many CBOs received positive feedback from the community and store owners during engagement events. However, CBOs found it difficult to effectively provide merchandising assistance, which required a unique skillset specific to someone in the retail industry. MHD found it best to delegate these tasks to a contracted retail consultant or internal staff with merchandising skills. CBOs were, however, highly skilled at coming up with creative ways to engage their community and draw attention



Enhancements entailed grouping similar products in black produce baskets in coolers and hanging large “Fresh Produce” banners in highly visible locations near produce.

to the program. For example, one neighborhood association used an online survey to gather feedback from the entire community, not just those that shopped at the corner store. Another organization with an in-house hot meal assistance program and food shelf found that advertising the corner stores on table-tents inside their facility was a great way to draw a crowd and highlight the new fresh food options nearby.

Increase the visibility, attractiveness and variety of fresh produce

Prior to enhancements, most stores participating in the program carried at least five varieties of produce, the minimum amount required by the staple foods ordinance, although their selection was limited to potatoes, onions, lemons, limes and bananas. When evaluated over the five-month follow-up period from January to May 2013, the Health Department found stores increased their average number of varieties to 11, a 39% increase over baseline, and included new varieties of produce such as apples, oranges, and green peppers. To encourage owners to maintain variety and restock their shelves, The Health Department used display baskets in coolers that acted as place-holders for produce. Additionally, as produce sales increased, owners recognized the demand and met it with greater supply and variety.

Enhancements Must Be Tailored To the Specific Needs of the Store

This program offers a tailored approach to improve the retail food environment in each store. Health Department staff and CBOs worked with space limitations unique to each store and developed a plan based on their needs. While this method is labor intensive, it played to each store's strength. For example, one store in north Minneapolis had a cooler in full sight at the entrance to the store that was being used to sell off-brand soda. After consulting with the store owner, MHD used this cooler to display fresh produce and cross-merchandised it with healthy beverage options such as water and 100% juice. Other stores had prime areas near the register that MHD used for baskets of fresh fruit items such as bananas, apples, and oranges alongside trail mix or peanuts for healthy grab-and-go options. The Health Department has learned to view space limitations as a creative challenge, rather than a barrier to success.



Store owners committed and engaged in the program often experience the most sales growth.

Increase store owner knowledge of fresh produce handling and merchandising

Merchandising of produce continues to be a challenge and many store owners find it difficult to maintain the appearance and quality of displays, despite training efforts. All store owners enrolled in the program received informal one-on-one trainings with MHD staff on produce merchandising and handling specific to their store. Additionally, through group trainings, 35% of store owners received 45-minute presentations outlining small business skills and tools along with merchandising techniques for displaying healthy items. These store owners reported having an increased understanding of merchandising and felt the trainings were beneficial for them to attend.

Address supply issues through procurement projects

St. Thomas

To date, St. Thomas has successfully sold their produce to three stores in south Minneapolis. This program is successful due to its informal nature, ability to offer free delivery, involvement of student youth, locally grown appeal, and low prices; all of which make it easy for owners to offer it for sale in their stores. Challenges of implementation have been lack of variety and limited types able to be grown in the local climate, low and inconsistent supply, merchandising and packaging of produce for retail, and lack of marketing around the new program. However, these challenges can be seen as inherent in a pilot program and many of the issues could be eliminated or reduced in future work.

EFN

Approximately 10 stores showed interest in the EFN program and from these, four stores ordered at least once. One store made regular and consistent orders during the winter months, however, this store discontinued ordering in the spring. MHD learned from this pilot program that EFN still could not provide the flexibility that owners wanted to feel they were in control of their produce purchasing. When asked about the program, store owners said they simply did not want to deal with a wholesaler and they felt it was another “middleman” that made them purchase set quantities or order on specific days that did not fit their schedules.



Stores learned how to display produce attractively and effectively during group trainings.

West Broadway Farmers' Market

During the height of the growing season in July, August and September, the farmer's market successfully supplied several stores with fresh produce. However, store owners found it hard to make the time to come to the farmer's market on a weekly basis. Those that participated found they had to arrive early, otherwise the key items they wished to purchase, such as bananas, would have already sold out.

Overall, MHD learned the procurement system of the small local vendor was, in many ways, more successful than all three procurement options MHD tested. His success stems from his relationship with owners that are comfortable doing business with him, flexibility with delivery and case size, and informal relationships with store owners that share his same cultural background.

The Corner Store Environment is Always Changing

During the program, many situations arose that were out of the hands of MHD due to the inherent fluctuating nature of corner stores. MHD found owners were not consistent with their work schedules or went on extended vacation, stores closed down, or ownership changed hands. Often, mechanical issues occurred such as broken coolers, leaky roofs, or crashing point-of-sale systems. In some cases, stores lost WIC or EBT privileges due to compliance issues. These factors all contribute to the overall consistency and quality of produce available in the stores. Owners required a high amount of coaching and support to help them through these situations and continue momentum on the project. Health Department staff found they had to be flexible and open to changes as they occurred in the field.

Summary and Next Steps

Overall, through participation in the Minneapolis Healthy Corner Store Program, store owners have been able to offer more varieties of fresher and more appealing produce to customers and have reported throwing less produce away each week due to spoilage.

Most store owners see value in carrying healthy foods and plan to continue offering fresh produce for sale in their stores. Additionally, a few owners have been self-motivated to implement their own changes by buying new produce



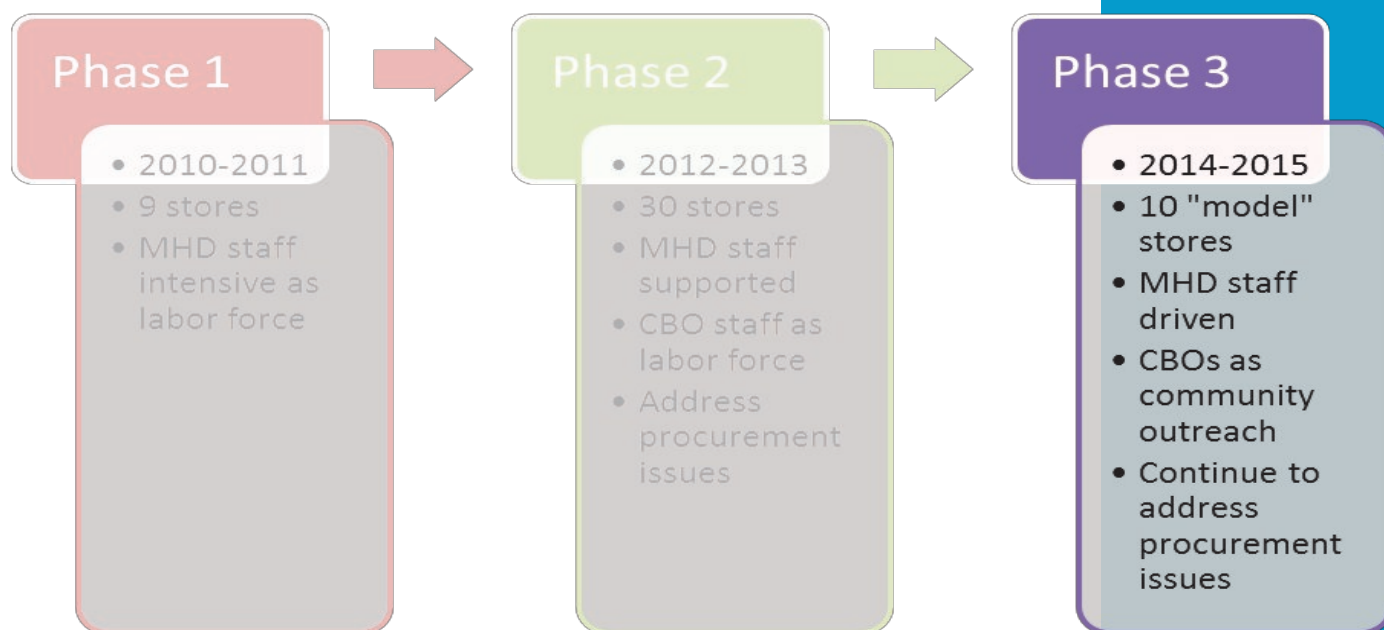
coolers or dedicating more shelf space to fresh produce and other healthy options. For example, one owner has made store improvements to enhance his produce displays; including installing new coolers for fresh produce and is in the process of opening a deli which will offer healthy to-go lunches.

In November 2013, MHD received another two-year grant from the Minnesota Department of Health's SHIP to continue its obesity prevention strategies, including the Healthy Corner Store Program. From evaluation of Phase 2, MHD learned produce sales were modest, averaging less than \$10 a week and remaining a small fraction of sales, even after enhancements. The Health Department also found stores needed even more support by people with the right skills in retail food marketing and merchandising for long-term outcomes to be high quality and substantial beyond just the five varieties required of the staple foods ordinance. To make these sustainable changes to the food environment, the Health Department plans to work with store owners highly motivated to make significant changes in their store and offer more healthy foods in multiple categories such as low-fat dairy, low-sodium products, and healthy beverages. In the next two years, the Healthy Corner Store Program will focus on investing deeper into a smaller number of stores (10) to make them "model" healthy stores in their community. By working with this smaller cohort of stores, the Health Department plans to intensify the amount of technical assistance and support available for each store to make them prime examples of what it means to be a healthy corner store. MHD recognizes the need to shift social norms so that customers learn to expect healthy food available in their corner stores and regularly purchase them. This, in turn, will help drive sales and motivate other store owners to adopt similar practices for healthy foods.



Additionally, MHD will continue to work with CBOs to conduct community outreach events and will pilot new, innovative methods for produce procurement along with expansion of the University of St. Thomas program. To increase the minimum standard of required healthy foods, MHD will work to pass revisions of the staple foods ordinance, which will impact more types of stores such as gas stations, dollar stores, and pharmacies that sell a significant amount of food, but rarely have a sufficient selection of healthy options. If passed, MHD will work with the City's Regulatory Services department to develop resources that support owners' efforts to make improvements, monitor compliance, and enforce the new standards.

Going Forward



In Phase 2, program staff continued to learn important skills and information needed to execute this project. However, the project continues to be a work-in-progress and much work is needed going forward to create healthier food environments within these stores and increase the demand for healthy, fresh foods in the community.

Appendix A: Staple Foods Ordinance

CODE OF ORDINANCES- Title 10 - FOOD CODE

CHAPTER 203. GROCERY STORES AND SPECIALTY FOOD STORES

203.10. Definitions.

As used in this chapter, the following words and phrases shall mean:

Accessory food items. Non-staple food items, such as coffee, tea, cocoa, carbonated and un-carbonated drinks, candy, condiments, and spices.

Grocery store. A retail establishment that sells such products as staple foods, accessory food items, and household goods.

Perishable foods. Those items that are fresh, un-refrigerated or refrigerated staple food items that will spoil or suffer significant deterioration in quality within two (2) to three (3) weeks.

Specialty food store. A retail establishment that sells only specialized types or classes of staple foods and accessory foods, including, but not limited to, such establishments as imported food stores, gift shops, department stores, and general retail stores that specialize in products other than consumable products. Such an establishment may not sell tobacco products. A specialty food store is not a grocery store that sells a wide variety of common staple food items so as to be eligible for government supplemental nutrition programs.

Staple foods. Those food items intended for home preparation and consumption, including meat, poultry, fish, bread, and breadstuffs, cereals, vegetables, fruits, fruit and vegetable juices, and dairy products. (96-Or-005, § 1, 2-9-96; 2008-Or-015, § 1, 2-29-08; 2009-Or-185, § 1, 12-4-09)

203.20. Requirements.

Grocery stores and specialty foods stores are both subject to the requirements of chapter 188. A grocery store that does not possess a grocery license as of February 9, 1996 must meet the requirements of subsections (a) and (b). All grocery stores licensed under this chapter except those exempted pursuant to section 203.30 must meet the requirements of subsection (c).

- (a) The grocery store shall provide and maintain a minimum sales floor area of two thousand (2,000) square feet.
- (b) The grocery store shall provide and maintain a minimum of four (4) adjoining off-street parking spaces, notwithstanding the provisions of chapter 531
- (c) All grocery stores licensed under this chapter must offer for sale food for home preparation and consumption, on a continuous basis, at least three (3) varieties of qualifying, non-expired or spoiled, food in each of the following four (4) staple food groups, with at least five (5) varieties of perishable food in the first category and at least two (2) varieties of perishable food in all subsequent categories:
 - (1) Vegetables and/or fruits.
 - (2) Meat, poultry, fish and/or vegetable proteins.
 - (3) Bread and/or cereal.
 - (4) Dairy products and/or substitutes. (96-Or-005, § 1, 2-9-96; 2008-Or-015, § 2, 2-29-08; 2009-Or-185, § 2, 12-4-09)

Appendix A: Staple Foods Ordinance

CODE OF ORDINANCES- Title 10 - FOOD CODE

CHAPTER 203. GROCERY STORES AND SPECIALTY FOOD STORES

203.30. Exemptions.

The following are exempt from the requirements of sections 203.20(a) and 203.20(b) and 203.20(c):

- (a) Specialty food stores.
- (b) Filling stations, licensed under chapter 287 of this Code, and having not more than three hundred (300) square feet of retail sales floor area.
- (c) Grocery stores located in the central commercial district, as defined in section 360.10

Additionally, a grocery store located in a shopping center as defined in section 520.160 is exempt from the requirements of sections 203.20(a) and 203.20(b). (96-Or-005, § 1, 2-9-96; 2008-Or-015, § 3, 2-29-08; 2009-Or-185, § 3, 12-4-09)

Appendix B: Visual Assessment



Minneapolis Healthy Corner Store Program Visual Assessment*

Store Name: _____ Address: _____

1. Main Phone Number posted? ☐ Y ☐ N _____

2. Hours of Operations posted? ☐ Y ☐ N _____

3. What is the square footage of the entire store? _____

4. What is the square footage of the retail space? _____

5. Photos taken of store interior and exterior? ☐ Y ☐ N

6. Please draw the store layout (indicate aisles, entrance, register and refrigeration). If there fresh produce is sold, show location.

Appendix B: Visual Assessment

Services provided by stores

Service	Yes/No	Comment/Describe
7. Accepts EBT	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	Is there a sign? Inside/Outside
8. Accepts WIC	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	Is there a sign? Inside/Outside
9. Has Kitchen or Deli Space	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
10. Sells Heated Food	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	

Existing Inventory of Fresh Produce and Healthy Foods

11. Signage promoting fresh produce visible from:

Outside Store? ☐ Y ☐ N Inside the Store? ☐ Y ☐ N

12. Is there a scale available for weighing produce? ☐ Y ☐ N

Fresh fruits & vegetables	Quality 1= poor; 2=fair; 3=good	Price (include unit- ex. per lb., each, etc.)	Product visible from store entrance?	Comments
13.			Yes / No	
14.			Yes / No	
15.			Yes / No	
16.			Yes / No	
17.			Yes / No	
18.			Yes / No	
19.			Yes / No	
20.			Yes / No	
21.			Yes / No	
22.			Yes / No	
23. Are there any point-of-purchase signs promoting the produce? Yes / No				

Appendix B: Visual Assessment

Other Healthy Items	Quality 1= poor; 2=fair; 3=good OR expired; not expired	Price (include unit-ex. per lb., each, etc.)	Number of types?	Comments
Beverages				
24. Skim milk				
25. 1% milk				
26. 2% milk				
27. Water				
28. 100% fruit juice				
Food Items				
29. Whole grain or whole wheat bread				
30. Whole grain cereal				
31. Whole grain pasta				
32. Brown Rice				
33. Nuts				
34. Frozen Vegetables				
35. Canned Vegetables				
36. Frozen fruit				
37. Canned Fruit				

Appendix B: Visual Assessment

How much space is devoted to (indicate number of aisles, endcaps, shelves, wire racks and refrigerator/freezers)

Food type	# of aisles	# of end caps	# of shelves	# of wire racks	# of coolers	# of refrigerators/freezers
38. Fresh vegetables						
39. Fresh Fruit						
40. Whole grain food items						
41. Low-fat or skim dairy products						

Available space for produce and healthy food options

Resource	Yes	No	Don't Know
42. Unused refrigeration (not beverage)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
43. Unused freezer space	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
44. Unused shelf space	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
45. Unused counter space	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
46. Unused cooler space	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix B: Visual Assessment

Physical Description of Store (please rate the quality of the following):

Exterior	Quality 1= poor, 2=fair, 3=good	Comments
47. Primary Entrance		
48. Lighting		
49. Awning		
50. Sidewalk		
51. Parking lot (if available)		
52. Public Trash Receptacles		
53. Overall cleanliness of exterior		
54. Are there any nearby schools? Yes/No		
55. Are there any nearby businesses? Yes/No		

Interior	Quality 1= poor, 2=fair, 3=good	Comments
56. Primary Entrance		
57. Lighting		
58. Shelving		
59. Cleanliness of Retail Area		
60. Cleanliness of Coolers		
61. Cleanliness of Receiving Area		
62. Organization of POS		

Appendix B: Visual Assessment

Indicate the number, size, and type of contents of coolers and refrigeration and freezer units:

Unit	Approximate Size	Primary Contents	Are they full	Comments
Example: 1 Freezer	5 ft x 2ft x 3ft	Ice cream, frozen juice	Yes / No	
63.			Yes / No	
64.			Yes / No	
65.			Yes / No	
66.			Yes / No	
67.			Yes / No	
68.			Yes / No	
69.			Yes / No	
70.			Yes / No	
71.			Yes / No	

Appendix B: Visual Assessment

Does store appear to have available space for promotional materials related to healthy foods?

Resource	Yes	No	Don't Know
72. Windows	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
73. Interior next to existing Register	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
74. Interior Wall space	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
75. Other Counter space	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
76. End Caps	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
77. Shelves	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
78. Other (please describe):			

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

Creating a Healthier Minneapolis
healthy eating + physical activity + smoke-free living

Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support (MDHFS)
250 S. 4th St., Rm. 510, Minneapolis, MN 55415-1384 | www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/dhfs
*Adapted from Delridge Corner Store Project

Appendix C: Owner Interview



Minneapolis Healthy Corner Store Program Owner interview*

Store Name: _____ Address: _____

Background Questions

1a. Are you a resident of the community in which your store is located?

Yes / No

➤ 1b. How long have you lived in this neighborhood?

2. How long have you owned this store?

- ☐ 0-2 years
- ☐ 3-5 years
- ☐ 6-10 years
- ☐ 10+ years

3a. Do you own other stores in Minneapolis?

Yes / No

➤ 3b. Where?

4. How many employees do you have (not including yourself)?

5. What is your typical weekly work schedule?

6a. Does your store currently advertise?

Yes / No

➤ 6b. Where and how often?

Product Offerings and Inventory System

7. Who orders the products for your store?

8. How do you make your product selections?

9. How do you track your inventory?

Appendix C: Owner Interview

10. How do you track your product sales?

11. How many vendors do you have? Who do you work with?

12a. Do you or your staff currently order from any produce suppliers?

Yes / No

➤ 12b. Which Suppliers?

13a. If your supplier is Core-Mark, are you familiar with their "right size" program?

Yes / No

➤ 13b. What are you currently selling from this product line?

14. What, if any, challenges have you had in carrying fresh produce?

☐ Sourcing affordable produce

☐ Spoilage before it sells

☐ Having adequate refrigeration

☐ Other (please describe): _____

☐ None

Customer-Base

15. Tell us a bit about your customer-base. Check all that apply.

☐ Limited English Proficient (LEP). Which language(s)?

☐ Neighborhood residents.

☐ Seniors

☐ Youth/ Students

☐ Families

☐ Commuters.

☐ Other (Please describe): _____

16. What percent of your customers do you estimate are "regulars?"

☐ less than 20% ☐ 20 - 40% ☐ 41 - 60% ☐ 61 - 80% ☐ 81 - 100%

17. Who shops at the store most frequently? (seniors, youth, workmen)?

18a. Do you have a way to track the number of customers that come in each day?

Yes / No

➤ 18b. Please describe how:

19. On average, how many customers do you have each day?

☐ under 50 ☐ 50-100 ☐ 101-150 ☐ 151-200 ☐ over 200 ☐ All ages

Appendix C: Owner Interview

20. What are the busiest days of the week?

☐ Mon ☐ Tue ☐ Wed ☐ Thu ☐ Fri ☐ Sat ☐ Sun ☐ All the same

21. What % of your customers do you estimate use WIC vouchers? ☐ N/A

☐ less than 20% ☐ 20 to 40% ☐ 41 to 60% ☐ 61 to 80% ☐ 81 to 100%

22. What % of your customers do you estimate use EBT? ☐ N/A

☐ less than 20% ☐ 20 to 40% ☐ 41 to 60% ☐ 61 to 80% ☐ 81 to 100%

Customer Preferences

23. What percent of your customers do you estimate comes in primarily for snack foods (e.g. pop, chips, candy):

☐ less than 20% ☐ 20 to 40% ☐ 41 to 60% ☐ 61 to 80% ☐ 81 to 100%

24. What percent of your customers do you estimate comes in primarily for staples like eggs, milk, butter, fruits and vegetables:

☐ less than 20% ☐ 20 to 40% ☐ 41 to 60% ☐ 61 to 80% ☐ 81 to 100%

25. What percent of your customers do you estimate comes in primarily for all of their food needs:

☐ less than 20% ☐ 20 to 40% ☐ 41 to 60% ☐ 61 to 80% ☐ 81 to 100%

26a. Do neighborhood residents ever comment about the fresh produce for sale here?
Yes / No

➤ 27b. What do they say?

27. What percentage of total store sales are for fresh produce (store over all versus fresh produce):

Sales	Daily %	Weekly %	Monthly%	Annually%
Fresh Produce				

Potential enhancements for store

28a. Do you have any plans for any physical improvements to your store in the next year?

Yes / No

➤ 28b. Please Describe:

Appendix C: Owner Interview

29a. Do you currently have any broken coolers that need to be removed?

Yes / No

☞ 29b. How many?

30. We will be developing a project plan for your store to enhance the visibility of fresh produce of healthy foods. What are your top 3-4 interests from the list below?:

Assistance opportunity	Owner's top 3-4 interests
a. Cooking demonstrations with fresh fruits and vegetables	
b. Recipe cards for healthy dishes that include the foods sold in your store	
c. Resources to purchase or update equipment or make other internal improvements (baskets, small shelving)	
d. Energy efficient lighting/refrigeration	
e. In-store signage promoting healthy food options	
f. External improvements (i.e. painting your store, selling fresh produce outside)	
g. Tracking and monitoring sales of healthy foods	
h. Alternative sourcing strategies such as purchasing produce from the farmer's market, community garden, mini farmers market	
i. Purchasing, pricing, and stocking healthy food affordably (includes training on produce handling)	
j. Strategically displaying fresh produce and healthy foods	
k. Promoting healthy food choices to neighborhood residents	

Appendix C: Owner Interview

Store Owner Input on the Minneapolis Healthy Corner Store Program

31. What about this program made you interested in wanting to become a part of it?

32. Do you have any ideas to increase the availability, visibility and affordability of fresh produce and healthy foods in your store?

33. Are you willing to work with youth, community based organizations, and/or neighborhood residents on this project?

34. As part of your assistance, you will be receiving training on produce handling. Would you be available to attend a training with other store owners?

35. What concerns you the most about being a part of this program?

36. Are there any other questions you have about the program?

Comments:

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Appendix D: Merchandising Materials



Fresh Produce banners and signage: Printed in various sizes and materials to fit the needs of each store.



Fresh Produce signage available in **Somali** and **Spanish**.



Cooler door signs: printed as stickers or window clings to draw attention to fresh produce offerings.



Price Signs: printed on laminated cardstock and reusable.

Notes:



